

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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S E C R E T AMMAN 0376

STADIS/////////
EXDIS
FOR THE SECRETARY FROM THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652 GDS
TAGSC PFOR JO EG
SUBJECT: TALK WITH KING--EGYPTIAN RELATIONS

REF: AMMAN 0370

SUMMARY: KING QUITE DISTURBED BY EGYPTIAN UNLEASHING
OF ITS BIG GUNDS AGAINST JORDAN DURING RECENT CAIRO VISIT
OF HIS TWO EMISSARIES. HE DESCRIBED LETTER SENT BY
SADAT AND EGYPTIAN INSISTANCE ON ASSIGNING A
PREVIOUSLY REJECTED AMBASSADOR TO AMMAN AS SIGNS OF
RAPID DETERIORATION IN RELEATIONS WITH EGYPT. HE
DISCUSSED EGYPTIAN EFFORT TO TRY TO INDUCE JORDAN TO
PARTICIPATE IN A FUTURE GENEVA CONFERENCE IN WHAT HE
ASSUMED WAS AN OPERATION TO COVER EGYPT'S FLANK SHOULD
DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT BE REACHED.HE ALSO SAID SADAT
SUGGESTED HE PARTICIPATE IN GENEVA
IN AN EFFORT TO GET A FOLLOW-ON DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMWNW WHICH
HE SAID HE COULD NOT DO WITHOUT GETTING BACK OFF LF THE WEST
BANK AND ARAB JERUSALEM FROM THE ISRAELIS. HE RECOGNIZED
THAT POSSIBILITY WAS A NON STARTER. THE KING IS PREPARING A
REPLY TO SADAT'S LETTER TO HIM WHICH KING SAID WAS CLEARLY
INTIMIDATING AND DESIGNED FOR PUBLICATION. HIS REPLY
WILL ALSO BE DESIGNED TO BE PUBLISHED. KING SAYS HE
DEEPLY REGRETS PRESENT EGYPTIAN EFFORTS WHICH HE SEES AS
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DESIGNED TO PUT THE HEAT ON HIM. HE RETURNED TO THE

THEME THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO TRY TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH EGYPT, BUT HE IS NOT PREPARED AT THE SAME TIME TO DESTROY HIS IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH SYRIA. HE WAS PROVIDING THIS INFORMATION TO ME FOR THE SECRETARY SO THAT US WOULD KNOW OF HIS EXPECTATION OF ROUGH WEATHER AHEAD WITH EGYPT AND WOULD HAVE HEARD HIS SIDE OF THE QUESTION. END SUMMARY.

1. WHEN I SAW KING JANUARY 24, HE TOLD ME HAD SOME PARTICULARLY BLEAK AND UNREWARDING NEWS ABOUT EGYPT. HE REPEATED PRETTY MUCH WHAT RIFAI HAD TOLD ME (REFTEL) ALTHOUGH FROM AN ESSENTIALLY DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE AND WITH SOME DIFFERENCE IN THE DETAILS. HE BEGAN BY RECOUNTING FOR ME THE FACT THAT EGYPTIANS WERE INSISTING ON ASSIGNING AN INDIVIDUAL AS AMBASSADOR TO AMMAN WHO HAD BEEN ASKED TO LEAVE IN 1970. KING SAID HE HAD ORIGINALLY WRITTEN A QUIET LETTER TO SADAT AND HAS SENT ALONG TAPE RECORDINGS OF THE ABOVE INDIVIDUAL MAKING UNFLATTERING COMMENTS ABOUT SADAT HIMSELF. KING INDICATED THAT IN RETURN HE HAD RECEIVED A LONG AND VERY DIFFICULT LETTER FROM SADAT.

2. LETTER HAD AN AIR ABOUT IT OF BEING A DOCUMENT READY FOR PUBLICATION. MAIN THEMESE WAS THAT WHILE JORDAN HAD IN QUIET SAID IT WAS WORKING FOR EGYPTIAN AND SYRIAN RAPPROCHMENT IN PUBLIC IT HAD TAKEN POSITIONS REGARDING SINAI II AGREEMENT WHICH PITTED IT DIRECTLY AGAINST EGYPT. THE LETTER MADE A NUMBER OF ASSERTIONS ABOUT JORDAN'S STAYING OUT OF THE OCTOBER WAR AND IN SNIDE TERMS SAID IT HOPED NEW JORDANIAN RELATIONSHIP WITH SYRIA WAS NOT A MATTER OF EXPEDIENCY BUT THAT JORDAN WOULD COME INTO THE NEXT WAR AT THE OUTSET. KING SAID VERY LITTLE OF THE LETTER WAS DEVOTED TO THE PROBLEM OF THE AMBASSADOR. BUT THE LATTER DID SAY THE NEW AMBASSADOR HAD BEEN IN JORDAN TAKING INSTRUCTIONS FROM A FORMER PRESIDENT, HAD BEEN A LOYAL SERVANT OF EGYPT, AND THAT SADAT WISHED TO HAVE HIM IN AMMAN. PRESENT EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR IN AMMAN WAS ACCUSED OF IN THE LETTER OF HAVING SENT MISLEADING REPORTS TO CAIRO AND A STATEMENT WAS MADE THAT

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JORDANIANS HAD COMPLAINED ABOUT HIM. KING SAYS AS FAR AS JORDAN KNOWS PRESENT AMBASSADOR HAS WORKED HARD AND THEY HAVE NEVER COMPLAINED.

3. KING SAYS THAT HE WILL NOT ACCEPT THE PROPOSED AMBASSADOR AND WILL DO THE DIPLOMATIC THING BY NOT ANSWERING THE REQUEST FOR AGREEMENT. HE WILL CONTINUE WITH THIS EVEN IF IT MEANS SHUTTING DOWN THE

EMBASSIES IN BOTH COUNTRIES AND HE WANTED US TO KNOW HIS FEELINGS AND UNDERSTAND WHY THERE MIGHT BE STORMY WEATHER AHEAD FOR EGYPT AND JORDAN. HE SAID HE HAD GENUINELY HOPED TO PLAY A RESPONSIBLE INTERMEDIARY ROLE. I REMINDED HIM OF OUR OWN UNHAPPINESS WITH HIS STATEMENTS ON SINAI II. HE SAID THAT HE HAD TRIED NOT TO LEAVE US IN ANY DOUBT ABOUT HOW HE FELT AND HAD KEPT QUIET AS LONG AS HE FELT HE COULD. MEANWHILE A US MAGAZINE ARTICLE TO WHICH SADAT SPECIFICALLY OBJECTED HE FELT CONTAINED SOME MIS QUOTATIONS AND LEFT OUT EVERYTHING IN HIS INTERVIEW WHICH HE HAD SAID WHICH HAD BEEN COMPLIMENTARY TO EGYPT AND SADAT.

4. KING SAID HE IS NOW COMPELLED TO SEND TO SADAT HIS OWN LETTER OBVIOUSLY ALSO PREPARED FOR PUBLICATION WHICH WILL TRY TO REFUTE SADAT'S POINTS. HE SAID ALL OF THIS VERY UNHAPPILY COULD GET MESSY.

5. CONTINUING ON HE NOTED THAT THE TWO EMISSARIES (RIFAI AND TALHOUNI) HAD BEEN TOLD BY FAHMY NOT AS PRIME MINISTER RIFAI CLAIMED SADAT, THAT EGYPT WAS READY TO GO TO GENEVA AND WANTED JORDAN THERE WITH IT. KING SAID WE ARE NOT GOING TO GO PURELY TO GIVE EGYPT COMPANY IN A THIRD STEP ON THE SINAI AND EGYPTIANS KNOW THAT THE ONLY POSSIBLE DEAL WE CAN ACCEPT IS FULL RETURN OF WEST BANK AND JERUSALEM AND THAT IS NOT GOING TO HAPPEN. KING SEEMED LESS DISTURBED THAN RIFAI APPEARED TO BE ABOUT THE IMPLICATIONS OF WHAT SADAT SAID HE WAS GOING TO DO NEXT INCLUDING THE POSSIBILITY OF ANOTHER STEP KING ALSO SAID NOTHING ABOUT WHAT SEEMED TO RIFAI TO BE AN EGYPTIAN EFFORT SOMEHOW TO INTRODUCE A STRUGGLE BETWEEN SYRIA AND ISRAELI WHICH EGYPT COULD THEN TAKE ADVANTAGE OF. KING WAS HOWEVER VERY UPSET BY OBVIOUS SADAT HEAVY PRESSURE ON
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JORDAN, INCLUDING THAT KING SAID WAS THE USE OF SCANDALOUS LANGUAGE TO HIS EMISSARIES: BY SADAT'S INSISTENCE THAT MIDDLE EAST IS NOT BIG ENOUGH FOR SADAT AND EGYPT ON THE ONE HAND AND ASAD AND SYRIA ON THE OTHER--"ONE OF US HAS TO GO": AND WITH WHAT HE TOOK TO BE EGYPTIAN EFFORTS TO STIR UP THE FIGHTING IN BEIRUT BY THREATENING TO UNLEASH PLO BRIGADE FROM EGYPT AND USE OF INFLAMMATORY RADIO BROADCASTS ON LEBANON FROM CAIRO. (KING SEEMS TO HAVE FORGOTTEN ASAD'S "UNLEASHING" OF SOME PLA TROOPS ALSO CONTRIBUTED TO RECENT CRISIS;)

6. KING FINALLY CONCLUDED THAT SOMEHOW POSSIBLY BECAUSE WE HELD BACK AND TRIED TO ENCOURAGE RAPPROCHEMENT BETWEEN EGYPT AND SYRIA, THAT JORDANIAN POSITION APPEARED NOW

TO SADAT TO BE ONE OF WEAKNESS. KING IS OBVIOUSLY UNHAPPY
AND UPSET BY EGYPTIAN PRESSURE, ALTHOUGH HE SAID "WE HAVE BEEN
THROUGH THIS BEFORE SADAT SEEMS TO HAVE FORGOTTEN.
AND WE ARE PREPARED TO LIVE WITH THE CONSEQUENCES BUT
WOULD STILL LIKE TO PLAY A CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE WITH BOTH
EGYPT AND SYRIA IF WE COULD.
PICKERING

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